

the fact that in 1946-47 he had had men hunting them for me far and wide, and that they were only found in this one small area. He said that the bird is closely associated with the "Ka" tree on which is found a certain caterpillar which appears in April; the Mbakpa is said to eat these caterpillars as they fall to the ground. Of other food, it appears to be very fond of simsim, and will be found in these crops when they are ripe. It possibly eats telebun, but not durra.

I asked the sub-chief about the breeding season, and he stated that this is about September or October, and that only two eggs are laid. I told him that I had been informed that eggs were laid in April or May, and sometimes as many as ten. He scoffed at these suggestions, insisted that September—October was the correct breeding season and that never more than two eggs are laid; he would not even admit three eggs.

I was lucky enough to obtain two pairs of freshly laid eggs; the natives who brought them to me each followed the method of burning the grass, watching for the Francolins to fly away, and then running in to collect the eggs. I am the first to admit that this is not conclusive evidence, but I have no reason to believe that they have foisted the eggs of some other species on to me; they played fair with the bird itself, and I am prepared to believe that they have played fair over the eggs. I must leave it to the experts to say what they think.

Finally. I showed my specimens of this Francolin to the mission schoolboys at Mboro in the hopes of discovering whether it exists in other places, for the boys came from many localities other than Mboro. There was much disagreement, but as the boys were about to go home for their holidays, I asked them to try and find specimens and to send them through the Mission to the Governor of the Province. Just before I left the Southern Sudan in April, a specimen reached me in an advanced state of decomposition; I was unable to make anything of it as a skin, but it was undoubtedly a female Banded Francolin, and I have since learned that it came from Raga which is nearly 200 miles west of Mboro, that is to say in the general direction of Bozum.

Professor E. STRESEMANN mentioned that there is one of Heuglin's specimens, an adult-female, in the Berlin Museum.

New Races of a Courser, Woodpecker, Swift, Lark, Wheatear, and Serin from Africa.

Colonel R. MEINERTZHAGEN described the following six new races and exhibited specimens:—

CURSURIUS CURSOR THERESAE, new race.

Description.—Differs from *Cursorius cursor rufus* Gould, in having the mantle, paler, less rufous and more isabelline, the blue of the nape usually paler and purer blue and the forehead always a paler chestnut. Breast a more isabelline colour and not so brown; black belly-band less well defined.

Description.—So far only known from Little Namaqualand south of the Orange River around Pofadder and Springbok.

Type.—Adult male, near Springbok, Little Namaqualand. 7 May, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection. Cal

Measurement of the type.—Wing 138mm.

Material examined.—A large series of *Cursorius cursor rufus* in the British Museum from the High Veldt of South Africa and four specimens of *Cursorius cursor theresae* recently obtained from Little Namaqualand. The differences ascribed to this new race are perfectly normal, Little Namaqualand having a sub-desert climate with a minimum rainfall.

GEOLAPTES OLIVACEUS THERESÆ, new race.

Description.—Top of head dull blue-grey, not olive green as in *Geocolaptes olivaceus* (Gmelin). Mantle browner, not so yellow or olive. Throat whiter and not buff. Size as in *G. o. olivaceus*.

Distribution.—The mountainous country around Springbok, Little Namaqualand, where it is not uncommon.

Type.—Adult male. Ten miles north of Springbok, north-west Cape Province. 8 May, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection.

Measurements of the type.—Wing 128mm.

Material examined.—A large series of *G. o. olivaceus* from Cape Colony, Transvaal and Natal, in the British Museum and a single pair of *G. o. theresae* from the type locality. I can trace no previous record of this species from Little Namaqualand. The series of *G. o. olivaceus* shows that specimens from drier areas (Kalahari, etc.), tend to be paler than others from near Cape Town and Natal, though none of them approach *G. o. theresae* in the blue-greyiness of the head.

APUS AFFINIS THERESÆ, new race.

Description.—Differs from *A. a. affinis* (Gray) in being a much paler bird in all respects and more nearly resembles *A. a. galilejensis* (Antinori) from which it differs in having the crown and forehead not a mouse-brown or even pale mouse-brown, but a grey-brown, almost blue-grey.

Distribution.—Only so far known from the type locality, Brandvlei, north-west Cape Province, South Africa.

Type.—Adult male, Brandvlei, Cape Province, 3 May, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection.

Measurements of type.—Wing 127 and of co-type, a female on same date and at same place 136mm.

Remarks.—I have examined the large series of *A. a. affinis* and *A. a. galilejensis* in the British Museum and my own extensive series including topotypical specimens from northern India and the Sea of Galilee. I consider *A. a. abyssinicus* Streubel, 1848; Massawah, Eritrea, to be indistinguishable from *A. a. affinis* of India, West African specimens being sometimes slightly darker than East African specimens. (See also Bannerman, *Ibis* 1932, p. 686; Bannerman, *Ibis* 1924, p. 224; and Grant and Praed Bull, B.O.C. 1937, p. 21).

The two specimens of this new race were obtained from a small colony of some dozen birds apparently nesting in huts; though no nests were seen, birds were passing in and out of eaves.

Though Roberts ("Birds of South Africa," p. 157) states this bird is a common resident species, I personally, after four years residence in that country have never come across it. Niethammer and Hoesch ("Vog. Deutsch-Sud-West-Afr.," p. 204) did not obtain or observe it in Namaqualand though Bradfield obtained a specimen at Quickborn in Damaraland.

The development of a pale race of this swift from the arid region of south-west Africa is not unexpected and that it should approach the arid-region race of the Mediterranean-Palestine-Sind area (*A. a. galilejensis*) rather than the more humid region race of the Indian Peninsula and tropical Africa (*A. a. affinis*) is quite normal and further demonstrates desert influence on plumage whether the animal benefits or not; whatever camouflage a bird like a swift adopts, it can have no selection value, for movement cancels out camouflage. There can be no question of selection acting on variation. Some other agency is at work and about that we are ignorant; in any case this is not the place to embark on lengthy discussion about a subject which incites curiosity and about which I have a great deal to say.

CALANDRELLA SCLATERI THERESÆ, new race.

Description.—Paler and greyer above than *C. s. sclateri* (Shelley) and considerably paler below.

Distribution.—So far only known from near Pofadder.

Type.—Adult female. Twenty-five miles east of Pofadder, 6 May, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection.

Measurements of the type.—Wing 80, culmen from skull 13mm.

Material examined.—Three specimens of *C. s. theresæ* from the type locality and eleven specimens of *C. s. sclateri* from the western part of Cape Province and Damaraland.

CALANDRELLA (SPIZOCORYS) SCLATERI. (Shelley).

Calandrella sclateri (Shelley), Birds Afr., 3, 136. 1902: Hountop or Stormtop R. Great Namaqualand. Type in British Museum; collected by Anderson who clearly refers to this specimen under *Alauda conirostris* (Bds. Damaraland, p. 193). Collected in June, 1862, when Anderson was at Objimbinque between Windhuk and Walvis Bay. The type is in worn plumage and very dirty.

Calandrella sclateri capensis, O-Grant. 1913: Philipstown, Cape Province. Type in British Museum; a badly prepared specimen but in fresh plumage and differing in no respect from the type of *C. sclateri*.

Seven specimens of this small lark were collected near Prieska and Upington in Cape Province and near Pofadder in Little Namaqualand.

ŒNANTHE LUGENS VAURIEI, new race.

Description.—Differs in the male from *O. l. lugentoides* (Seebohm) in having the basal half of the outer tail feathers pale orange and not white and the crown slightly tinged brown, not so pure grey. Differs from *O. l. lugubris* (Ruppell) in having basal half of tail and rump a paler orange and the crown whiter. The female differs from *O. l. lugentoides* in having a slight orange wash on basal half of tail and rump, and from *O. l. lugubris* in being altogether a browner and paler bird. Mantle of female as in *O. l. lugentoides*.

Distribution.—Only so far known from Erigavo between 6,000 and 7,000 feet in eastern Somaliland and the Warsangli country.

Type.—Adult male, Erigavo, British Somaliland, 6,000 feet, 20 January, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection.

Measurements of type.—Wing 84, culmen from base 17mm.

Remarks.—Inhabits the rocky ravines near Erigavo, Medishe, and on Daloh Mountain up to 7,000 feet. *O. l. boscaweni* Bates from the Hadramaut has a completely white crown and is a perfectly valid race, blending with *O. l. lugentoides* in the western Hadramaut, southern Arabia.

Based on three males and three females from Erigavo and a female in the British Museum from the "Warsangli country" obtained by Archer.

This race is of great interest as it confirms the close relationship between the *Œ. lugubris* and *Œ. picata* groups.

I am naming this race after Mr. Charles Vaurie who has recently reviewed the eastern races of this species, though I differ in my treatment in regarding *Œ. lugens*, *Œ. picata* and *Œ. lugubris* as conspecific.

SERINUS ALBOGULARIS THERESÆ, new race.

Description.—Differs from *S. a. albogularis* (Smith), in having a much paler mantle, grey-brown instead of brown or sometimes reddish-brown and the underparts a paler tone. Differs from *S. a. crocopygia* Sharpe, in having the rump and upper tail coverts greenish-yellow instead of bright lemon yellow. Eyebrow apparent but not well marked. It is also a shade paler on the mantle than *S. a. crocopygia*.

Distribution.—Only so far known from 50 miles east of Springbok in Little Namaqualand, Western Cape Province; and from Aus in the extreme south-west of South West Africa. Abundant on a rocky ridge east of Springbok and a few seen among rocks at Aus.

Type.—Adult male, 50 miles east of Springbok, Little Namaqualand. 7 May, 1949. In the Meinertzhagen collection.

Measurements of type.—Wing in quill. Wing of cotype 80mm. The type is in very fresh plumage and has only just completed body moult.

Remarks.—I have examined a considerable series of *S. a. albogularis* and *S. a. crocopygia* from the Cape Province and South West Africa

respectively in the British Museum. Another race to be considered is *S. a. sordahlæ* Friedmann, Proc. Biol. Soc., Wash. 45, p. 65, 1932; Brukkaros Mt., S.W. Africa, between Mariental and Keetmanshoop, which is said to be as dark as *S. a. albogularis* but with a longer and relatively less swollen bill, and can therefore have nothing to do with this new race.

On *Eremopterix leucopareia cavei* Grant & Mackworth-Praed.

Colonel F. O. CAVE sent the following:—

In Bull. B.O.C. 61, p. 62, 1941, C. Grant and Mackworth-Praed described this new race on a single female specimen obtained by me in the south-eastern Sudan. I have now obtained four males and one female from the same area and find that they are referable to *Eremopterix signata* (Oustalet). The females of these two species are almost identical, and accurate identification can only be assured by a comparison of the males, which has now become possible from the above specimens. I have compared my female with the type of *Eremopterix leucopareia cavei*, and find they are identical; I have compared them both with the females of *E. leucopareia* and *E. signata* and find that the large bills belong to the latter species. Moreover, my female was shot in company with a male which is clearly referable to *E. signata*.

I have also compared my four males with the series in the National Collection and consider that they can be separated from typical *E. signata*. Therefore *Eremopterix leucopareia cavei* now becomes *Eremopterix signata cavei*.

Description of male.—Similar to *E. signata signata* but clear grey brown, not sandy brown; the white of the underparts a purer white with no creamy wash.

Measurements of four males.—Wing 77-79.5, exposed part of culmen 9-11, depth of bill at base 7.5, tail 44-46, tarsus 17-18mm.

Distribution.—Extreme south-eastern Sudan from Atoporopos Hills to Lake Rudolf. Two birds in the National Collection from Turkana District of Kenya agree sufficiently with this race to be included in its distribution.

On the Little Grebe, *Podiceps ruficollis* (Pallas) from the Thames Valley.

Colonel R. MEINERTZHAGEN sent the following note:—

Four adult breeding birds taken in April and July from the Thames around Pangbourne are considerably blacker above and below than others taken in many parts of the British Islands and more closely resemble specimens from Holland which are toponymical of *P. r. ruficollis*. Breeding birds from elsewhere in the British Islands,